

## Contributions.

### WHAT I WOULD ASK.—1 KINGS III. 5.

CELIA SANFORD.

If I might ask a boon from heaven,  
If God to me should say,  
"Ask what thou wilt, it shall be given,  
Choose what the gift shall be:  
A garland wove of fadeless flower,  
Of richest tint and hue,  
Called from the blest immortal bowers  
And pearled with heaven's dew.  
"A cup o'er-brimmed with choicest wines  
From grapes of Eden pressed;  
Jewels of gold or costliest gems,  
A crown at thy behest;  
A gifted mind, and honored name,  
A visage beautiful;  
Long life, or health, or wealth, or fame,  
Or youth perpetual;"

Weeping I'd fall low at his feet  
And proffer my request;  
Of earthly good give what is meet,  
Withhold what seemeth best;  
But give me Lord what most I crave,  
A heart all pure within:  
O, thou who hast all power to save,  
Cleanse me from every sin.

Give me a heart to do thy will,  
An earnest, trusting heart;  
True faith and love that thinks no ill,  
And thy rich grace impart:  
Abide with me, O Christ, my Lord,  
My Guide and Leader be,  
Make me to understand thy word,  
And bind my soul to thee.

Each Christian grace in me implant  
And make me holy thine;  
My heart, my soul, my life cement  
To Christ, the living vine.  
O'er every sinful thought and word,  
Give me the victory;  
But I am weak and helpless, Lord,  
My strength must come from thee.

—Christian Standard.

### OPINION VERSUS TRUTH.

Extract of an address delivered by Rev. John Crawford Mackey, B. D., pastor of the First Brethren church, Hagerstown, Md., Nov. 28th, 1894.

People are apt to be carried away by the ideas of others. While our day is a time of thought the responsibility of thinking is too frequently delegated to representatives, forgetful of the fact that each individual must think and investigate for himself.

A lawyer, a physician, or a clergyman of long standing in a community wields a powerful influence in his sphere of work, and all the more careful ought he to be not to mislead by pressing simply his opinions in guise of truth.

A few days ago there appeared in one of our daily papers a report of an address on "Controversy," delivered by

a divine of some reputation, in which this statement was made as to the modes of baptism: "The quantity of water and the manner of performing the ceremony are non essential." This may be the divine's sincere opinion, strange as it does seem, but truth tells us that we are to be baptised in water and gives us the precise mode. The clergyman further volunteers the following: "If a person would come to me to be immersed, saying it was a matter of conscience with him and that he could not be saved unless he was immersed. I would say, no, I will not. I will not lend a hand to such narrowness." *Narrowness! Narrowness!* Suffice it to ask, is not the learned Dr. his own most cruel critic?

Let us see how the Word of Truth regards our august opinions. Naaman was a leper. But in the family of this great captain was a little maid, a prisoner from Isreal, who knew that the Divine Father could cure her master. It was told Naaman. But instead of taking God's appointed way, through the prophet, the king of Israel is sought. The king resents the appeal as an insult to God, and the prophet learns of it and urges that Naaman come to him. Naaman comes and listens to the order: "Go wash in Jordan seven times." He becomes enraged and suggests other means, then he complains of the waters of Israel and expresses his preference for those of Abana and Pharpar. But the order stood, and it was not until he obeyed implicitly that "his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean."

Take the case of Saul. Saul was directed by God through the prophet Samuel to make war upon Amalek and utterly destroy all that they had. He was to "slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass." Now Saul went into the battle, fought and won. He then took Agag the king alive, but killed all his people; he also saved "the best of the sheep and oxen and fattings and lambs and all that was good." In other words he pressed his own opinion as to how the spoils of war should be treated, vs. God's order, just as Naaman was inclined to do in his case. A knowledge of the king's doings came by uncon-

cealing inspiration to the old prophet of God, and with a sorry heart he treads his way to the king and asks what means "the bleating of the sheep and the lowing of the oxen?" Then Saul unfolds the pathetic story of his disobedience and hears from the grave, old Samuel these fiery words: "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord he hath also rejected thee from being king." To similar consequences and condemnation are we exposed when we persistently exalt our own opinions against the truth as it is in Jesus.

### THE PURCHASE PRICE.

"Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men." 1 Cor. 7-23.

How fully, and sure, we would feel and realize the sad conditions of the affairs of this life if we were to transact business so as to bring upon our earthly possessions such debts as we were entirely unable to pay, and such that if the entire estate was sold would not release the debt; we would at once feel and know our inability to redeem and save our home. We would know also that the only way that we could still hope to enjoy our earthly possessions would be through the help of a friend and oh, how we would love and appreciate the kindness of such a friend that would redeem our possessions and make us free from our debtors' claim against us and say to us, now friend, I have redeemed you from the debt that you could not have paid, and that would entirely have brought you to want and misery. Though it took all that I had to give, you are now made free from the debt that was over you, but after this you must over come what comes against you as I have, for behold I have made you free; and give you an example that ye should do as I have done, for behold my life has been successful, and I am now ready to reap my reward. Would we not love and honor such a friend as this, and be attentive to his advice, and study well his manner of life, and walk in obedience to his commands, so as to